



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

*From the Desk of Gerry O'Keefe*

July 16, 2011

### **Fourth Anniversary Celebration**

As the nation wraps up its July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration, this month marks another milestone for the Puget Sound Partnership—our 4-year anniversary. We are celebrating the progress made in the past four years to restore the health of Puget Sound. I continue to be impressed by the hard work of our partners implementing the Puget Sound Action Agenda. I'm happy to report that of the 30 highest ranked near-term actions in the Action Agenda, we've completed or are on target with 77 percent of them. Of all (146) near-term actions in the plan, 66 percent are either completed or on target. To help tell the story of these successes, future updates will highlight the important work of our partners.

### **Recent Successes of the Puget Sound Partnership**

This is a big year for the Puget Sound Partnership. Some highlights include:

- ✓ **Created a Strategic Science Program**

Established the regional vision for building ecosystem knowledge, synthesizing scientific work, identifying priority information needs, and fostering new science capacity. Part of that includes the Puget Sound Science Update, that addresses the best scientific understanding of ecosystem conditions, desired outcomes and measures, ecosystem impacts and recovery strategy effectiveness that is peer-reviewed by prominent regional scientists.

- ✓ **Regional Targets Set for Puget Sound**

Thanks to the active participation and hard work of our partners, 16 regional targets have been adopted for the region to aim to achieve—guiding the recovery of Puget Sound. The targets provide a framework to align resources and funding so the region can collectively focused on outcomes that have the greatest impact. Some of the target topics are below. Additional information can be found in PSP's [news release](#) and Web page: [www.psp.wa.gov](http://www.psp.wa.gov). We also have another 2 targets that will get set in October related to land development and land cover. These were targets the business community asked us to delay until we could have some discussions.

- ✓ **Tracking Puget Sound Health and Recovery**

The Puget Sound Partnership has created the Puget Sound Dashboard, a list of 20 indicators

that will tell us whether progress is being made – and to alert us if there is something wrong. Just like the dashboard on your car, you will be able to see in a glance how fast we are going in efforts to improve water quality, habitat and our own role in restoring the Sound. They can also serve as a warning if we don't see the improvements we need. Specific indicators recently adopted look at environmental, human, and economic health the Action Agenda supports. Some examples include: Water quality and quantity, wildlife abundance, the amount of shoreline armoring and development, and the levels of poisons in fish and sediment.

✓ **Increasing Public Awareness**

We recently won a 5-year, \$6 million grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to lead a regional effort to educate and motivate residents to make specific actions that will benefit Puget Sound. We will do this in partnership with the Department of Ecology, the STORM coalition of municipalities, and ECO-Net, which is a network of nearly 500 education and outreach partners. We are using television, radio, print, and social media in our “Puget Sound Starts Here” public awareness effort.

**More Time for Public and Stakeholder Engagement in Action Agenda Update**

The Partnership adopted the Action Agenda in 2008 and the legislature requires an update every two years. The Partnership originally planned to release a completed draft in August. However, as we work with and listen to our partners, one request we have received almost uniformly is for more time for public and partner participation in the work to update to the Action Agenda. We will accommodate our partner's requests by making a minor schedule adjustment.

The development of draft strategies and actions will stay on track and be completed by late August 2011. The Partnership will then convene stakeholder workshops and public forums in September and October to collect input on and refine the draft strategies and actions. After receiving additional stakeholder and public feedback, the draft strategies and actions will be incorporated into an updated Action Agenda and Biennial Science Work Plan that will be presented to the Leadership Council at their public meeting December 4-5. This meeting provides another opportunity for the public and stakeholders to provide feedback, in addition to the formal public comment period that will follow.

Given the important role that the public and partners must have in implementing the Action Agenda, this schedule adjustment will result in more robust, effective and widely supported strategies. More detailed information will be available soon at: [www.psp.wa.gov](http://www.psp.wa.gov)

**Connecting with our Partners**

One of my priorities and privileges as the Director of the Partnership is connecting, listening and partnering with the many entities that make the Puget Sound recovery effort possible. This past month it was an honor to be a guest speaker at the Association of Washington Cities annual conference and the Association of Washington Business' Government Affairs Council Retreat. I have also been meeting with local county elected officials throughout the region. These were great opportunities to listen to the most important issues from their perspective and share how the

Partnership might better interact with them. Please contact our Director of Public Affairs [Michael Grayum](#), or me if you know of upcoming opportunities for us to connect with your organization.

### **Poop and Puget Sound**

If you haven't seen it on [You Tube](#) or our [Web site](#), I wanted to be sure and share a creative video produced by our local government partners as part of the "Puget Sound Starts Here" campaign to raise public awareness about the need to scoop pet poop. It features Martin Luther from the Roots, the house band on Late Night with Jimmy Fallon.

### **Coordinating to Clean Up the Samish Basin**

One of the most challenging and rewarding issues has been working with partners (*local, federal, state, tribal, and others*) to craft a [10-point action plan](#) that builds on existing efforts to help clean up the Samish River basin. The Samish has been plagued with shellfish bed closures when it rains heavily. The action plan focuses local and state resources on the problem, with the common goal of improving the water quality and keeping shellfish harvesting open year-round.

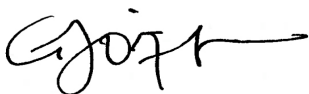
You can learn more about this important issue [on TV](#), as TVW recently featured the Samish Bay issue, highlighting the Partnership and two of our many partners in the area who are working to solve this crisis. Bill Dewey of Taylor Shellfish and Corrine Story of the Skagit County Health Department did a great job conveying the challenges of this water quality crisis and the work ahead for the many partners in this community.

### **Thank You**

On behalf of the Puget Sound Partnership, thank you for all you do. We're all in this together and will set Puget Sound on a path to recovery by 2020.

Please stay tuned for regular monthly updates from me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerry O'Keefe". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gerry O'Keefe  
Executive Director, Puget Sound Partnership